

FIRST
R E P O R T
OF THE
SELECT COMMITTEE
ON THE
ROADS
FROM LONDON TO HOLYHEAD,
AND
FROM CHESTER TO HOLYHEAD;
&c.

NORTH WALES.

*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
25 February 1822.*

THE REPORT	- - - - -	p. 3
THE APPENDIX, viz.		
N ^o 1.—Report of Mr. Thomas Telford to the Commissioners acting under the Act of 55 Geo. III, for the Improvement of the Holyhead Roads	-	p. 5
N ^o 2.—Account of Money paid into the Exchequer by the Post Office, towards the Repayment of £.125,000, for building a Bridge over the Menai Strait, &c.	- - - - -	p. 7

REPORT.

THE SELECT COMMITTEE appointed to inquire into the state of the Roads from *London* to *Holyhead*, and from *Chester* to *Holyhead*; into the regulations for conveying His Majesty's Mail between *London* and *Dublin*, and between the Northern Parts of *England* and *Dublin*, and between *Dublin* and the interior of *Ireland*; and into the state of the Mail Coach Roads in *Ireland*; and to report their Observations thereupon, together with the Minutes of the Evidence taken before them, from time to time, to the House;—HAVE, pursuant to the Order of the House, examined the Matters to them referred, and agreed to the following REPORT:

YOUR Committee having called for Mr. Telford's last Report to the Commissioners acting under the 55 Geo. III, for the improvement of the *Holyhead* Road, relating to that part of it which lies in *North Wales*, and having taken the same into their Consideration, beg leave to submit to the House their Opinion, that it would be of great advantage to the Public, and highly creditable to the National character, to complete the improvement of this Road, in the manner proposed by Mr. Telford in his last Report to the Commissioners.

In pursuance of the recommendation of former Committees, to whom, in 1815 and in subsequent years, this interesting and important subject was referred by the House, Parliament has been pleased to grant several Sums of the public Money to improve this formerly most inconvenient and dangerous Road, by which the communication between *London* and *Dublin* is maintained.

Your Committee do not hesitate to say, that no second opinion can be entertained concerning the vast public utility of the Works which have been completed, or the skill and good management with which they have been executed.

All the beneficial results which former Committees predicted of them, have been more than accomplished; and although the Sum which they have cost is considerable, it is scarcely possible to conceive how a similar expenditure of public money could be more largely repaid, by contributing, as it does in numerous ways, to the economy both of time and expense, in so great a variety of public avocations.

In respect to the improvement that still remains to be completed, the question for the House to decide is, whether, after having made 63 miles of the most perfect Road that ever was constructed in this or in any other country, it will leave 20 miles, in small patches between the new Roads, in their ancient, crooked, narrow, and in many places unprotected and dangerous condition?

To be able to travel a distance of 83 miles; namely, from the Bridge at *Chirk* to *Holyhead*, through the most mountainous district of the United Kingdom, along a Road not made as Roads usually are, but actually built over all varieties of rugged surface, uniform in shape, perfect as to its smoothness and solidity, free from a single inconvenient inclination, and in its progress passing over the great chasm of the *Menai Strait*, is to do that which cannot be done even in those countries where the most profuse expenditure on Roads has been directed by the greatest talents and enterprise.

Your Committee therefore trust that the House, after having acted with such distinguished liberality in promoting the Communication between *England* and *Ireland*, will accede to this, the last claim which can be made upon it, for aid in the way of a Parliamentary Grant for the improvement of this Road.

Your Committee are informed by one of their Members, who is also a Commissioner for the improvement of this Road, that a Balance of some thousand pounds will remain in the hands of the Commissioners when the Works now in progress will be finished; so that the Sum requisite for the completion of the whole, according to Mr. Telford's Estimate, will be but of trivial amount.

This Balance, with a grant of 5,000*l.* in the present Session, will be sufficient for the present year; and then there would remain but a small Sum to be given in the next Session to carry completely into effect the great public object which in 1815 Parliament undertook to accomplish.

Your Committee beg to refer the House to the following Report of Mr. Telford, for a more full explanation of the progress of the Works which have been voted in former Sessions, and for the Estimate of the Expense still to be incurred; and also, for a description of the present state of the Bridge now building over the *Menai*, and of the New Road across the Island of *Anglesey*.

They also beg to refer the House to the Account annexed to this Report, showing the Sum of Money, amounting to 11,502*l.* 8*s.* 7*d.* which has been repaid to the Treasury, for the two last Works, by the Post Office, as the Produce of the Duty of One Penny a Letter on all Letters going to or coming from *Holyhead*.

25 February 1822.

APPENDIX.

—N^o I.—

REPORT of THOMAS TELFORD to the Commissioners acting under the
55 Geo. III, for the improvement of the *Holyhead Roads*.

North Wales.

SINCE my last Report respecting the important portion of the Holyhead Road that passes through the mountainous parts of North Wales, which the Commissioners laid before Parliament in June 1821, and which, in that shape, came before the Public, the Improvements have been carried on with unceasing energy; and the result has been, that the following Works, then reported as being in progress, have been completed.

Works completed.

- 1.—A considerable distance along the rugged base of the Hill at Ogwen Bank.
- 2.—Sundry Variations and Improvements along the steep Banks in the Dee Valley, between Owen Glendwr's Hill and Rhysgog Hill.
- 3.—A Variation on the southern side of Llangollen Church, by which the crooked and inconveniently narrow Streets of that Village are avoided.

Besides these Works which have been completed and travelled over by the Public, the following have been undertaken, and are now proceeding rapidly:

Works in hand.

- 1.—Sundry Variations to shorten the distance, and avoid or remove sundry inconvenient Hills and Hollows between Cernigoe and Cerig-y-druidion.
- 2.—A Variation between the Aqueduct of Pontcysyllte and Chirk Castle Gardens, in order to avoid three Hills, and cut off the acute angle at Whitehurst's Gate.
- 3.—Widening and re-making the Road between Chirk Castle Gardens and the Village of Chirk, and making a very considerable Embankment between the Village and the Bridge, in order to lessen the inclinations of that deep Valley.

These and other Works which have formerly been reported as completed, will make a perfect Road of 42 miles out of 62, the distance between Chirk Bridge (the eastern boundary of North Wales) and Bangor Ferry at the Menai Strait, where the Bridge is now constructing.

But between the several portions of new or improved Road, there still remain parts of the old imperfect Road, which in some places are too narrow and crooked, and in others unprotected and dangerous. As it would be a great public object to make these parts equally perfect with the before-mentioned improved parts, and thus form a Road through North Wales from the Bridge at Chirk to Holyhead, of 83 miles extent, of uniform solidity, shape, and dimensions, and in every respect equally safe and commodious, I have made the following Estimate for the consideration of the Commissioners.

ESTIMATE FOR COMPLETION:		£.	s.	d.
For widening and improving the Road between Llandegai and Lon-issa, now only 12 feet wide		710	5	6
Between the improved part at Ogwen Bank and that west of Lake Ogwen		1,042	16	6
A part of the Road east of Capel Cerig		1,304	17	—
Do - - a little to the westward of Bettws-y-coed		578	8	—
Between Rhydlanfair and Glan Conway		604	16	6
Immediately east of Cernioge		507	13	—
Between - do - and Cerig-y-druidion, in two places		936	2	6
To the east of Cerig-y-druidion		1,008	17	—
From - do - to Glen Dyffws		1,646	1	6
Between Glyn Dyffws and the Druid Inn		1,397	19	9
Between the Druid Inn and Corwen		2,530	15	6
Through the Town of Corwen and to Owen Glendwr's Hill		2,690	2	9
From eastern extremity of Rhysgog Hill to the Town of Llangollen		1,940	16	—
Between the Town of Llangollen and Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, including Variations to avoid two Hills		5,302	19	—
Seven Toll Houses and Nine Gates		1,900	—	—
Total Expense		£. 24,102	10	6

The improvements of the Road, as they have been in succession completed and opened to the Public, have, in every instance, fully answered all the expectations which had been formed of them: their utility becoming every day more manifest. So that a journey, which a few years ago could not be undertaken without great personal trouble and considerable danger, and which took a long time to perform, is now made with rapidity, comfort and security.

Mensi Bridge.

The large Pier on the Carnarvonshire side is carried up to the level of the Roadway; that, on the Anglesey side, to 15 feet above the Springing of the Arches; the smaller Piers are up to the Springing of the Arches. One Arch on the Carnarvonshire side is turned; of another three-fourths is turned, and of the third about one-fourth. The Arches on the Anglesey side must wait the three Centres, now employed, being relieved; which would have been before this, had not stormy weather prevented vessels from venturing upon the exposed part of the Coast, where the Quarries are situated; and where a great quantity of stone now lies prepared for the shipping.

Anglesey Road.

Between Bangor Ferry and the Five Mile Stone from Holyhead, four out of five of the lots of New Road are completed, and the fifth is so nearly so, that an arrangement has been made with the Trustees of the Old Road to have this New Road, of 18 Miles in length, opened on the 12th of next May, from the Ferry to the Five Mile Stone; and as the new Inn will previously be habitable, the Traveller may be fully accommodated.

The Road between the Five Mile Stone and the Stanly Sands is in hand; the Embankment across the Sands begun, and the Road from that place to Holyhead has just been let to Messrs. Gill and Hodges at the estimated Expense.

Bangor Ferry, }
8th February 1822. }

(Signed) THOMAS TELFORD.

To Alexander Milne, Esq.